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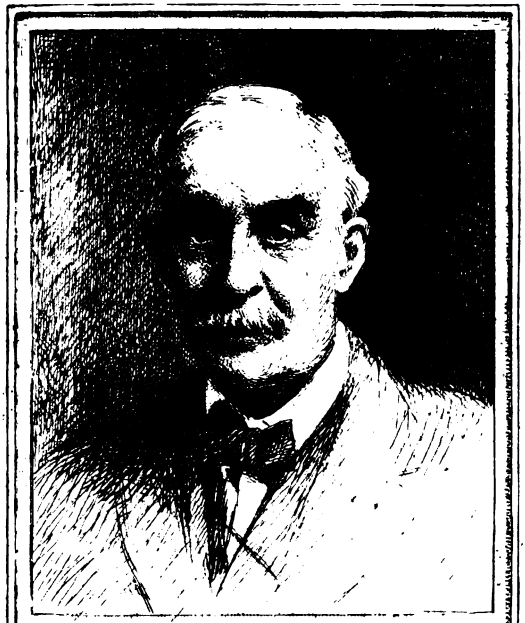

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MODERN CRITICISM;

OR,

THE NEW THEOLOGY.

MODERN CRITICISM;

OR,

THE NEW THEOLOGY.

THE BATTLE OF THE CRITICS.

"Why is this religious teaching rightly called new? Not because it is new in the sense of being different from the old; for, in fact, it is only a renewing of the old—a return to primitive truth—a renovation of that which has been corrupted and deformed by age—a fresh breaking forth of the spring of living water, which had been choked up and covered over with rubbish and decaying matter."

DR. COLENSO, *Natal Sermons*, page 13.

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11-3-39 J.A.

MODERN CRITICISM:

OR,

THE NEW THEOLOGY.

Of late years many eminent writers have so questioned the accuracy of the literal sense of Scripture, upon critical and scientific grounds, as to weaken the faith of many in its divine authority, and to lead them to view a large portion thereof as a Jewish, and therefore now a bygone, superstition.

The necessity for this criticism has been thus urged upon us. "It is certain," says Dr. Colenso, "that in this age of ours every part of the New "Testament as well as the Old, will be subject to a "close and searching criticism. We cannot, if we "would, escape this trial of our faith; for God, "our God and Father, has called us to it. As "plainly as in the days of the Reformation men "were called to brace up their minds for a mighty "struggle between the powers of light and the "powers of darkness, so surely, if we read the "signs of the times, the like struggle is coming "now, nay, rather, is come upon us." (Natal Sermons, p. 191.)

And what is this close and searching criticism said

to reveal? It is said to reveal that "so far from being "in every line and letter infallibly true, the Bible, "with all its divine lessons, is yet a human book, a "collection of ancient writings by fallible men, and "full of human errors, mistakes, contradictions, and "inconsistencies;"—that "a more hopeless, carnal, "and eventually sceptical position it is impossible to "conceive" than that "which identifies the written "Word with God's Revelation" of Himself to man (Natal Sermons, pp. 38, 56),—that "a great part of "the events related in the Old Testament has no "more apparent connection with our religion than "those of Greek and Roman history. . . The num- "bers, migrations, wars, battles, conquests, and re- "verses of Israel have nothing in common with the "teaching of Christ, with the way of salvation, with "the fruits of the Spirit: they belong to a totally "different order of subjects" (Ibid. p. 40. From Bp. S. David's Charge, 1863, p. 123);—"that the "Bible is only a miscellaneous collection of treatises "or tracts, each of which has or had a history of its "own, an authorship, occasion, date, structure, trans- "mission, and difficulties of its own" (Ibid. p. 55. From "The Bible and its Interpreters," Dr. Irons)—that "in many cases they cannot possibly have been "written by the authors whose names they bear, and "to whom we have supposed them to belong; that "most of the books of the Old Testament have "manifestly been retouched by the different authors; "that very frequently the statements of one book "are contradicted by another book, or even by itself.

" At once the miserable cloud of scepticism rises up " to dim the brightness of our hope, if it does not " altogether darken it; and we close the book, shud- " dering with a painful misgiving, and feeling that " the iron of unbelief has entered into the soul." (Natal Sermons, p. 66.) Certainly, if the Church be founded upon the Bible, Dr. Colenso does not exaggerate the anticipated changes in the theological world resulting from a close and searching criticism, when he says they will be often " most painful and " distressing ;"—" it will seem as if the foundations " of the universe were shaken, the sun and moon " darkened out of heaven, the earth reeling, the " stars falling." (Natal Sermons, p. 38.) What an achievement of Modern Criticism, that the critical scholar should of his knowledge maintain that for the most part the Scriptures are *not* divinely inspired, and that our Lord himself fell into errors, upon which our Modern Critics—clergy among the number—are better informed!

True it is, that we are told by some of them that, notwithstanding all appearances, there is no real ground for alarm; that we have only to be patient, and in God's light we shall see light. (Natal Sermons, p. 38.) But what, according to them, is the light we are to see? In God's light we are to see that the first eleven chapters of Genesis are purely legendary: in God's light we are to see that the narrative in Exodus detailing the construction of the tabernacle, the minute directions for sacrifice in Leviticus, the records in the Book of Numbers of the

numberings and marches of the people of Israel, the wars and conflicts in Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, are no part of the word of God (Ibid. p. 64); and having seen all this, and much more than this, our faith in the rest, whatever that may be, is to stand the more sure. Will it do so? Modern Criticism, as we shall have to show, may create difficulties, but cannot remove them, except by removing the document in which they occur: its office is to destroy and not to save; to shake the heavens and the earth, and, as to what then remains, to shake that also, if it could.

One critic lays down certain so-called incontrovertible principles, invalidating the Divine Authority of Scripture only to a certain extent, and excusing himself from going further. Another approves of the principles, but shows how they must necessarily be further extended. There, however, he thinks it prudent to pause. Another tells you it is impossible to pause there; that the truth must now be told; that Criticism must be bold to tell it; and so the progress of Criticism has been continuous, till there is little, if anything, left to criticise.

Not that Criticism is to be disparaged in its proper place; but it has usurped an office which does not belong to it. Criticism is only a servant: it has aimed to be master; to dictate to us what is Divine Wisdom, and what is not; what the Holy Spirit says, and what he does not; what is Divinely inspired, and what is not; as if Grammars and Dictionaries were to determine the limit of man's spiritual vision, or to lay down the law for the Spirit of Truth.

How, then, shall we meet the difficulties raised by these scientific Theologians? To answer them in detail would require volumes; and, accordingly, volumes have been written upon the subject. But we shall have to shew that, however excellent in themselves, the replies have not laid the axe to the root of the evil.

Accordingly, in these remarks, our concern is not with details, but with first principles. We shall bring before you, *first* of all, the great principles upon which Modern Criticism has been founded, and the results to which they lead: we would show you that those principles are false, and therefore that no Criticism founded upon them, however learned, can be true. Our *second* object will be to show the mutual relation between the literal and the spiritual senses of Scripture; our *third* and last, the relation of both to the Reformation of the Church.

First, then, with regard to the leading *principles of* Modern Criticism.

Our Modern Critics tell us that it is only a principle of common sense that, in order to interpret a document, we should first ascertain what the document is; and accordingly that the first thing to to be done is to settle the text (Biblical Criticism, Dr. Davidson, p. 2); that, after this, we may proceed with confidence to interpretation. The consequence of giving this precedence to the study of the letter, is to give precedence to literal interpretation; and this being done, to make the literal sense of Scripture the criterion of the spiritual sense; so that if,

apart from the spiritual sense, the Critic be persuaded that the literal sense must be rejected, the spiritual sense is rejected also, as having no foundation on which to rest.

Take, for one example, the first eleven chapters of Genesis. The scientific theologian undertakes to show that the entire natural sense has no historical truth in it; and, therefore, that to build up a spiritual sense upon a literal, is only to build up a spiritual sense upon what is untrue. "I assert," says Dr. Colenso, "without fear of contradiction, that "there are multitudes now of the more intelligent "clergy who do not believe in the historical truth "of the Noachian Deluge, as recorded in the Book "of Genesis." (Pentateuch and Book of Joshua Examined. Pref.: part 2, p. 84.) "To build the "authority of Revelation," says Dr. Davidson, "on "the *untrue* can answer no good purpose. It is "therefore incumbent on the enemies of historical "criticism, who dislike its decision regarding the "Pentateuch, to refute it on historical grounds." (Int. to Old Testament, vol. i, p. 131.)

Now, untruth cannot, it is presumed, serve as a foundation for truth; and, therefore, to build up a true spiritual sense upon an untrue literal sense is only to build up one delusion upon another; in other words, to elicit a spiritual sense from out of a mere legend.

But in considering a revelation made from God to man, from the divine to the human, it may rationally be seen that such a document would be an accommo-

dation of truth to the apprehension of men, by such things as would represent and signify heavenly wisdom, such as types in the form of narrative, true history, prophecy and types (it may be unconnected in onward series), and psalms, intermediate between prophecy and common discourse. In this case, the spiritual sense would give birth to the literal,—it was the spiritual which preceded the literal; thus inverting the order observed in general by our Modern Critics, who make no exception to the rule, according to which the literal precedes the spiritual. In so doing, they themselves transgress their own laws of sound criticism; for sound criticism demands that the documents of every age shall be judged according to the style of writing which prevailed at that time, not according to the style which prevails at this. Now, it is well known that the style of the Ancients was remarkable for concealing wisdom under types and narrative. In those days it was never meant that the truth of the historical sense should be the test of the truth of the spiritual sense, any more than that natural truth should be the criterion of spiritual truth. It was the spiritual sense which in those times gave rise to the historical narrative. The letter was from a human origin, but the spirit was from a divine origin, the union, of the two giving holiness to the revelation and causing it to become a medium connecting heaven with earth; and it is the spiritual sense which preserves it, accordingly, in the present day. The remark, therefore, of Dr. Wordsworth, that "the letter can-

not stand securely without the spiritual "interpretation" (Int. to Kings and Chronicles, &c., p.25) is as important as it is true, even where the narrative is, in point of fact, unhistorical. The letter will follow the fate of the spirit, and both go into perdition. Accordingly, into perdition the Critics have sent them. They have trusted more to Grammars and Dictionaries than to a study of that mode of thinking which prevailed at the time in which the Hebrew language originated. How can any one be said to know a language apart from the thoughts which that language was meant to embody? Surely a person with moderate critical knowledge of the language, who was yet well acquainted with the mode of thought which prevailed at the time when the language arose, has a far better knowledge of the language than he who has the profoundest critical knowledge of the words, and is utterly ignorant of the thoughts they were designed to convey. Even then, supposing a person possessed only a moderate knowledge of the Hebrew language, and was well acquainted with the mode of thinking which originally prevailed, that person would be a far safer guide to follow than the profoundest verbal Critic of modern times who was ignorant of it; and for this reason, that he is far more likely, after all, to understand the genius of the language.

Let us take another example, and let it be from what is admitted to be real historical fact—the building of the Tabernacle, with its attendant circumstances.

We all know that the Tabernacle, and afterwards the Temple with its varied services, were the very heart of Jewish Economy; that to these the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets are ever referring; so that if the Divine origin of the Tabernacle and its ritual should be called in question, much more, if regarded as the absurd superstition of an ignorant age, the whole Divine authority of the Bible must be undermined in the same proportion.

Now, what does the scientific theologian tell us? He says, that when God commanded Moses to build the Tabernacle, he is represented as speaking "with " an outward and audible voice through the air;" that the words thus spoken are often "frivolous," " trivial," and even " mean;" conveying no moral and religious sentiment, but tending rather to fix the mind on objects of superstition; " that there " are whole chapters full of these trifling directions " which can neither have proceeded from God nor " have been supposed by Moses to do so;" that " Moses therefore never wrote the narrative; that " it records only the ruder conceptions of a later " age;" and as such is altogether puerile and unworthy of reception by the modern scientific theologian. (See Davidson's Intr. to the Old Testament, vol. i, section 10, page 233.)

These remarks occur in a work dedicated to a learned Prelate of the Church of England, and pronounced by some to be a masterpiece of Modern Criticism; indeed Bishop Colenso himself speaks of it as " the most able work which has appeared in

"England on the subject of Biblical Criticism." You will observe how the most sensuous conception is here formed of Jehovah *speaking*, how that conception being declared to be unworthy of God, is declared also to be unworthy of the word of God; how the narrative is said to be untrue, and, being untrue, cannot be made the foundation of that which is true. The lower is thus made the judge of the higher, the sensuous of the spiritual; for the literal sense being regarded as "mean," "trivial," and "frivolous," any spiritual sense elicited from it is regarded as of the same nature; on the principle that nothing but what is puerile can come out of what is puerile. The consequence is, that the letter being rejected, the spirit is rejected together with it; whereas, if the spiritual sense had been understood and received, the historical truth of the narrative would have been preserved; in other words, the spiritual sense would have preserved the literal. Thus, for instance, the inspired Books of Scripture are like the Tabernacle itself; having an inmost sense, distinguishing what is more immediately of God, corresponding to the Holy of Holies in which was deposited the Law of life; an inner sense, bearing reference to the spirit of that life, corresponding to the Holy place, in which worship and thanksgivings were offered to God; and an external sense, bearing reference to the outward action of that spirit in daily life, corresponding to the outward Courts, where purification and daily offerings to God were made; in all which there is latent a divine principle; so that the narrative concerning the

Tabernacle, instead of conveying only the rude conceptions of a barbarous age, is made to embody the wisdom of heaven.

We say the wisdom of heaven, for when Jehovah, in delivering the law from Mount Sinai is represented as *speaking*, it does not mean outwardly speaking through the *air*, but inwardly speaking through the heavens,—that is, speaking through angels. "The chariots of God are twenty thou-"sand, even thousands of angels. The Lord is "among them as in Sinai, in the holy place." (Ps. lxviii, 17.) Hence the Lord is called the Lord of Hosts. Accordingly, the Law was received, as St. Stephen says, "*by the disposition of angels.*" (Acts vii, 53.) St. Paul says it was "*ordained by angels.*" (Gal. iii, 19); and that it was "*The Word spoken* "*by angels.*" (Heb. ii, 2.) Now whether we say the Law was *ordained* through angels, or was *received by the disposition* of angels, it means the same thing; for it signifies the ordination, subordination, or arrangement of the Heavenly Hosts, or Heaven, as the medium through which Divine Truth was communicated to Moses. An ordination or disposition of this kind is revealed to us in the Book of Numbers, in the ordination or disposition of the twelve tribes of Israel; also in the Revelations; and again in the ordination or disposition of the precious stones in the breast-plate of Aaron. For Divine Truth, or the Word of God, descends by distinct gradations from the highest angelic hosts down to the lowest class of spirits put into

connection with the mind of man, so as to excite corresponding sensuous conceptions even in the lowest order of minds. Thus, also, it may excite corresponding articulate sounds in the sense of hearing; just as, inversely, articulate sounds from without, or the voice of one speaking, may excite sensuous impressions, and these again rational ideas in the natural mind, and these again spiritual thoughts.

Hence we may see how, when Jehovah spoke to Moses, He spoke not from *without*, but from *within*; not through the *air*, but through the *heavens*. The voice would appear to Moses as sonorous and real as if it came through the air; though Moses himself would know that it descended into the sense of hearing from within, through "the disposition of angels," who were so arranged as to transmit Divine Truth by orderly gradations from the highest angelic intelligences down to the lowest and most sensuous minds; so that truths of the highest order might embody themselves in the most external forms of the human mind, such as those presented by the senses. From the foregoing we may see how even the rudest conceptions of a barbarous nation may be made the medium of communicating the sublimist truths; how even the sublimest truths may incarnate themselves, as it were, in the lowest and most sensuous forms of the human mind. It is thus the connection is kept up between heaven and earth; between the mind of man, even in its most external state, and the mind of God. Deny this inward sense of the Law, therefore, and you deny that the Law was given by "the

" disposition of angels;" admit that the Law was given by "the disposition of angels," or by the heavens disposed into order for the communication of Divine Truth to the earth, and you admit the fact of an internal sense of Scripture. Deny that inner sense, and you destroy the connection between heaven and earth.

There is, however, a kind of internal sense which some Critics admit. When they meet the expression "*God spake these words and said,*" they affirm that it means the spiritual consciousness of the individual at that time: so that the words spoken have no meaning beyond that of the individual consciousness, however feeble it may have been. Besides this individual consciousness, however, Dr. Davidson admits that there may be a "*preconscious* region of the soul." (Intr. to the Old Test., vol. ii, p. 436.) This is an admission psychologically as important as it is true. But what is the preconscious region? It is a superior region of the mind answering to the lower; and the reason why we are not conscious of it is, because it is not in continuity with the lower, but only in correspondence with it, as what is inner with what is outward, the two being distinct one from the other. But the consciousness of the individual, in the case of a prophet or inspired person, is not, as Dr. Davidson supposes, the limit or measure of the Truth. A true psychological view is rather this: that the angel who inspires the words into the prophet, or into those who speak things inspired, as in the present case

into Moses, is only *in things spiritual,* and by these acts upon the mind of him who is inspired. It is thus that the angel excites thought, through the medium of which spiritual things descend into words according to the usage of the person. These words are thus such as are in the mind of the prophet, according to his peculiar apprehension and the form in which they reside within him. This is the reason that the style of the prophets is so diverse, each style being according to the analytical form previously induced by the person inspired, but in such wise only, that there is not the least word or iota that is not inspired.

It has already been shewn how, in this case, the individual consciousness was only an effect; how this effect was produced by a cause; how this cause was the disposition or ordination of angels, through which the Divine Idea, conceived in the depths of the Divine Mind from all eternity, and as such transcending to all eternity the wisdom of angels, could yet descend into the highest of the angelic hosts, and thence in orderly succession through all subordinate intelligences, down into the mind of a single angel filled with the spirit of God, and thence into the most external forms of thought of the human mind, clothing itself in the conditions of space and time; thus in the simple expression, "*God spake these words and said,*"—in thus speaking and saying, giving even minute directions concerning curtains and tables, broidered coats and candlesticks. And why? Because these things,

however apparently mean, trivial, and frivolous, may, after all, as to their uses, be patterns of things in the heavens, and things in the heavens, as to their uses, patterns from the Divine idea.

In adopting the principle of a single sense of Scripture, and that sense for the most part the literal, it must be owned, in justice to Modern Critics, that they are only working out to their consequences the principles of the Reformation. Let us see how, in adopting the merely literal sense of Scripture, they show it to be the basis of certain mischievous doctrines, and then repudiate the document as teaching the doctrines.

Presuming that all are acquainted with the prophetic answer to the question "Who is this "that cometh from Edom with dyed garments "from Bozrah," Dr. Davidson observes that the seer points the march of Jehovah in strong figures: "He alone accomplishes the deliverance of Israel, "treading down his enemies, the heathen nations, "in His fury, having His garments sprinkled with "their blood spurted upon them." The picture of Jehovah as a proud conqueror is "graphic," but "harsh," "unevangelical," and "revolting." "The "bloody trampling of them in fury, like the tread-"ing of grapes in a wine-press, is a bold but not a "Christian figure." "The passage does not relate "to Messiah, much less to His person. To refer "the treading of the wine-press to His endurance "of the Father's wrath, is revolting to the best "feelings. Yet the early ecclesiastical writers

" generally understood it so. Great injury is done " by such forced interpretations to the cause of " truth. Even Alexander speaks of the impossi- " bility of such a sense in the original passage, " though it is frequently adopted in sermons, " hymns, and religious books." (Intr. to the Old Test, vol. iii, p. 83.) As to this and other similar passages, as where God says : " I will render ven- " geance to mine enemies," " will make mine " arrows drunk with blood." " He put on gar- " ments of vengeance for clothing," " The day of " vengeance is in mine heart," "The sword of the " Lord is filled with blood," " The Lord revengeth and is furious " (Deut. xxxii, 41, 42 ; Isa. lix, 17 ; lxiii, 4 ; xxxiv, 6 ; Nahum i, 2),—what are all these and other expressions of the same kind, but, when taken in the literal sense separately from the spiritual, simply revolting ? Is it possible that such language can have any place in writings, whose inspiration is derived from " the disposition or ordination of angels ?" If so, where is its place in the scale of descent from God to man ? I answer : its place is the same with that of the Mosaic ritual. Spiritual things must be expressed by natural ; spiritual warfare by natural warfare. It is in a spiritual sense that the Lord is a man of war ; and the description is revolting only when the literal is separated from the spiritual ; for in the spiritual sense, what are the "*garments*," but the letter or clothing of the Word, and the "*blood*," but the *adulterations and falsifications of the lite-*

ral sense when separated from the spiritual? Apart from the spiritual sense, God is not the written Word in connexion with that sense, the literal sense is the fire, and the smoke, and the cloud, and the thick darkness, out of which His voice is heard to this day. For surely, if within the darkness of the mountain, the glory of God could be present, so in the thick darkness of the letter, the light of Divine Truth can be enshrined; as it is written, "He bowed the heavens and came down, and darkness was under His feet." Here, again, we may see how the spiritual sense in this way preserves the literal; and, especially if we have been Critics, how expressions which are accommodations of truth may themselves contain the truth,—nay, may themselves be Essential Truth in its accommodation; hence, how the accommodation of truth may be one form of the exposition of truth. (See Dr. Davidson's Intr. to Old Testament, vol. iii, p. 30.) Ancient writers understood these things better than Modern Critics; although Modern Critics may deny it, because they happen to have a more critical knowledge of the Hebrew language.

"The darkness of the cloud in which God was "designates the obscurity of the Law, and likewise "allegories," says Gregory the Great. "And God "made darkness His hiding place when He hid His "mysteries from the wicked." "The darkness "under the feet of God is the profundity of the "Scriptures in Christ and His Saints." "And the "darkness covering the sea is the obscurity of the

"precepts of the Law, as conveyed in allegorical "teaching." "A dark place is the letter of the "law not understood by the Jews." "Dark "waters in the clouds of heaven are the obscure "teaching of the Prophets." The covering of the Divine mysteries is also said to be "thick darkness." (See Jerome on Isa. xxix, 59; S. Paterius on Exod. xvi; Works of Gregory, vol. iv; Le Blanc on Ps. xvii; Lauretus Art. Caligo; also Commentary on the Psalms by Dr. Neale.)

Well, then, it is thus that God accommodates the brightest truths to the darkest minds; that he comes down to the apprehension of the most ignorant nation. "Ye have seen," says He, "that I "have talked with you from heaven." How could He talk from heaven with so degraded a people except by making the highest truths to assume the lowest forms of human thought, and therefore the lowest forms of human thought to contain the highest truths? One more instance of the way in which the Modern Critic makes the literal sense the criterion of the spiritual. It is said by the scientific theologian that "whatever scope for variety of "feeling is afforded by spiritual adaptations, their "indispensable preliminary in all cases must be a "frank acknowledgment of *the natural sense of the* "*document.*" (Daniel, by P. Desprez, B.D., Intr. by Dr. R. Williams, Int. p. 61.) Be it so. If now it can be shown that the natural sense is untrue, then the document is said to be untrue, even though it be admitted to record the very words of

our Lord Himself; so that *the natural or single sense is made to overturn the document*, and charge with self-delusion even the Divine Author of whom the document treats.

For instance: the scientific theologian says, that the second appearing of Christ is described as "accompanied with appalling natural phenomena, "the darkened sun, the bloodshot moon, the falling "stars, the roaring sea, the myriad hosts of heaven, "and the voice of the archangel," &c.; that these phenomena "cannot be reconciled" with the theory of a merely spiritual kingdom (Daniel, chap. x, p. 260; also page 276 *et seq.*); that our Lord has said that these things should come to pass before that generation had passed away; that our Lord's disciples had so understood Him; that nevertheless they did not come to pass; that the disciples, therefore, were mistaken; that the mistake was owing to the mistaken teaching of our Lord; that He was a Jew, and as such fell into the common notions of the Jews, and this, in the present case, through an ignorance of the future, an ignorance which He Himself confessed when He said, "Of that day "and that hour knoweth no man, not even the Son, "but the Father only."

So Renan: "Our principles of positive science "are offended by the dreams contained in the pro- "gramme of Jesus. We know the history of the "earth: cosmical revolutions of the kind which "Jesus expected are only produced by geological "or astronomical causes, the connection of which

"with spiritual things has never yet been demon-
"strated." (The Life of Jesus, p. 110.)

Dr. Pusey, speaking of Rationalists, observes:
"They also assume either the non-credibility of the
"Gospels, or (God forgive it) error in our Lord
"Himself, since He quoted that description of His
"Divinity and Power over all (Dan. vii, 13) as ful-
"filled in Himself." (Daniel the Prophet, p. 491.)

So Dr. Davidson: "Considering, therefore, the
"human limitation to which the Son of God was
"subjected on earth, we are not irreverent in sup-
"posing that He shared the common views of the
"Jews in His day, in regard to points ethically or
"doctrinally unimportant." (Intr. to Old Test., vol. i, page 128.)

So also Dr. Colenso, on "The Pentateuch," pp. 22, 81. Wilson's "Brief Examination," p. 17. See also Professor Jowett's "Remarks on Belief "in the Coming of Christ; First Epistle to the "Thessalonians."

Observe the process of reasoning. The natural sense of the document must precede the spiritual. The natural sense is here historical. Historical fact disproves the natural sense; therefore the natural sense is false, and as such not only can serve as no basis to what is true, but also proves Him who uttered the words to be a false Prophet; "His expectations, equally with those of His dis-
"ciples, were corrected by the event." (P. 293.)

We see, then, how it is that, under the plea of first ascertaining what the document is, the scientific theologian has recourse to grammatical criti-

cism; how grammatical criticism gives rise to grammatical intepretation and grammatical interpretation to the literal sense of Scripture; how the literal sense is made to precede the spiritual; then to become the arbiter of the existence of the spiritual; then to become a false witness against our Lord, by making Him a false witness; and, lastly, Judas-like, to destroy itself.

It may be said that we are taking extreme cases. If so, how is it that these extreme cases are becoming so common? No; we are only pointing out the natural and necessary consequences of the principle adopted by Modern Critics—that the Scriptures have only a single sense. Every one knows that this is not peculiar to Modern Critics; it was a principle adopted at the Reformation, and Modern Critics are only faithfully working it out. If the ceremonial law, or any part of it, has only a single sense, they are perfectly justified in maintaining that it has no longer any existence, and that it is ridiculous to suppose it was ever given by the ordination of angels. Accordingly, the spiritual interpretation of the *Law* has all but utterly died out of the Church; and together with it, the literal sense of whole verses, chapters, and books. Take the case of *Leviticus*. What is Dr. Wordsworth's own evidence?

"Only four chapters of this Book are read pub-
"licly in the Church of England in the course of
"the year. The Church, probably, was of opinion
"that, on account of its need of continuous inter-
"pretation, it might be more profitably reserved

"for private study, or for exposition by her "preachers in their sermons; but her expectations "do not seem to have been fulfilled."

"The Book of Leviticus seems to have almost "dropped out of the Sacred Canon, so far as that "Canon is received by a large number of Christians. "Many persons never open it at all, and even some "Biblical students and commentators treat it as if "it were only an antiquated record of an obsolete "ritual." (Intr. to Leviticus, p. 1.)

Can Modern Criticism do more? In treating Leviticus as only the antiquated record of an obsolete ritual, does it not find the ground for such a conclusion to be already prepared in the Church? A belief in only a single sense, and in the abrogation of the Levitical Law, has necessarily brought the Church to the same conclusion as the Critic. Why, then, should the Church denounce the Critic? Is it not idle to maintain the sanctity of Divine inspiration of abrogated Laws? If this be the case, answer the criticisms of scientific theologians as we may, and admit only a single sense, and what do we gain? The Book of Leviticus is, after all, with regard to any practical use to the Church, only the antiquated record of an obsolete ritual. This being admitted, all those parts of the Bible, including verses and whole chapters which treat of this ritual, become as obsolete and antiquated as the ritual itself; and, as long as the Critic sees and knows this to be the fact, is he likely to regard the voice of the Church, which denounces him with one breath and encourages him with the other?

"No," he replies; he is "not to be scared by the "anathemas or dogmatism, prejudice, or denuncia- "tions of noisy declaimers." (Dr. Davidson's Intr. to Old Testament, vol. i, p. 130.) He is not to be silenced by authority or by tradition. Criticism must be met by Criticism. Thus the fate of the whole Pentateuch, and even of the Bible itself, depends upon the battle of the Critics. Till this is finished, the faith of the Church, as founded on the Bible, is to be held in suspense.

Take, for instance, the Five Books of Moses. A few propositions, true in themselves, are made to justify their being swept away, with scarcely a fragment remaining. "Truth," it is said, "is in- "dependent of persons." "A Divine revelation "is not such because of the person who conveys it "in writing, but because it conveys Divine truth." This being granted, "revelation," it is said, "can "lose nothing by a critical rejection of the Mosaic "authority of the Pentateuch. That work, con- "taining a Divine revelation, must have a value "independent of authority derived from author- "ship." Be it so; but how is the authorship disproved? By disproving the unity of the document. How is the unity disproved? By the internal structure. "The objections derived from "internal "structure," it is said, "are conclusive against the "Mosaic authorship. Various contradictions are "irreconcileable." (Dr. Davidson's Introduction to Old Testament, vol. i, p. 130.) So, then, the authorship is disproved by the contradictory nature of the internal structure; and if you object that

the internal structure is thus disunited, or, as Dr. Colenso says, "falls to pieces in the reader's hands" (Pentateuch, p. 78), the answer is, we are only disproving the Mosaic authorship; and you cannot deny that truth is independent of persons. This being granted, the Critic feels himself at liberty to insist upon various readings, dates, and numbers "systematically and deliberately falsified," interpolations, inconsistencies, improbabilities, impossibilities, needless repetitions, direct contradictions, and a host of other difficulties raised up by Criticism at every step; turning every way, like the sword of the Cherubim, to keep the way to that inner Wisdom which is the Tree of Life.

It cannot be otherwise when men seek to enter the kingdom of God from below and not from above; when they strain their vision to see spiritual light from natural light; the revelations of spiritual truth from the revelation of Biblical Criticism, Geology, Astronomy, and Natural History. These all may serve to show that the more natural light, said by interpreters to emanate from Scripture, is false and delusive; but they cannot show the glory of the spiritual light within, for, like the cloud to the Egyptians, this is darkness to the natural mind. If then we would enter into the light of Divine Wisdom can we not point out a more excellent way?

We, too, wish to know what the document is; whether it be the Word of God or whether it be not. We, too, maintain that we are concerned only with the moral and religious element, and that it is in virtue of this alone that any part of the docu-

ment is the Word of God. But how shall we ascertain the moral and religious element? Not by a method of inquiry which involves its negation. The principle upon which the modern Critic proceeds involves, as we have seen, a negation of the moral and religious element at the very outset. The consequence is, that, on the question of Divine Inspiration, Modern Critics are at the very outset in a state of negation, and in this state of negation proceed to make their inquiry. Nothing is admitted but what is first proved. "The question is," says Dr. Davidson, "what is the true nature of the "Mosaïc records? To talk about their authority, "credit, and sacredness, till their real nature has "been settled, is nugatory. It is using words "vaguely, or using them with a certain implied "meaning, amounting to a begging of the question. "*The subject has nothing to do with personal reli-*"*gion.* It has to do with right views of revelation, "and greatly conduces to their formation?" (Intr. to Old Test.; vol. i, p. 130; also Dr. Colenso on the Pentateuch, p. 171.) But how are these right views attained? "We appeal," says Dr. Davidson, "to the test of an enlightened criticism, which "understands the Hebrew language, and does not "deal with quibbles and apologies." Well, then, it is Criticism which leads to right views of revelation; and to assume the authority, credit, and sacredness of the narrative till Criticism has settled them, is "*begging the question.*" Be it so; and what is the result of the critical inquiry, such as is derived, as we have already seen, from the intrin-

sic contradictions of the Books? All this being settled, Criticism has next to determine the question with regard to revelation. Who does not see that the question is settled beforehand; and that the Critic, when he comes to the question of revelation, is in a thoroughly negative state? For who would believe those books to be a revelation, which had previously been shown by Criticism to be, with a few grains of truth, one mass of contradiction—a revelation whose primary claim to that title is said to be founded in the fact of the books being historically true, while Criticism had already shown them to be historically false? (See Dr. Colenso on the Pentateuch, p. 67.)

Dr. Colenso, quoting from Dr. Davidson's Introduction (Pentateuch, Part I, Int. Remarks, p. 5, 8vo. Ed.), says, indeed, that "piety, humility, and "prayer are much needed here, by the side of "acuteness and learning." True; but the question is, Which comes first,—piety, or acuteness and learning? Dr. Colenso speaks of Davidson's *Introduction* as a work of Criticism: in this he is perfectly correct; it is Criticism which *introduces*, as the very title of the book implies; piety follows, and is obliged to take what Criticism gives it. Criticism, in casting out the spiritual sense, casts out the moral and religious element; and *afterwards*, in order not to appear to be irreligious, appeals to piety, humility, and prayer to sanction the proceeding. All the religious appeals in the *Sermons* of Dr. Colenso are founded upon the supposition that Criticism has already done its work.

Well, then, let us contrast this method of studying the Scriptures, as advocated by modern Critics, with that which is advocated by those who assume, upon various grounds, that the Bible is truly the Word of God. This is what Critics call "*petitio "principii,*" "taking upon trust," and "begging "the question;" whereas "I have gone upon the "principle," says Dr. Colenso, "of taking nothing "for granted" (Pentateuch, p. 78.) What, then, is it that we take for granted? An old superstition; "a thing of the past, which has already died away, "or is fast dying away, under the influence of modern "science, and amid the growing intelligence of the "age." Be it so; let us hold up to view this superstitious tradition in which we believe; for we have heard that "the foolishness of God is wiser than "men," and that "God hath chosen the foolish "things of this world" to confound the wise."

First of all, what is it that we take for granted? We take this for granted: "That inasmuch as the "Word is a revelation from the Divine Being, it is "Divine in all its particulars; for what is from the "Divine cannot be otherwise." "That what is from "the Divine Being has been given to man '*by the* "'*disposition of angels*' (Acts vii, 53); wherefore "it is accommodated to the wisdom of angels, and "to the apprehension of men. Wherefore in the "Word there is an inner sense suitable for the "angels; and an outer or natural sense adapted to "the apprehensions of men. Hence, that it is a "medium whereby the union of heaven with earth "is effected."

These are the things we believe. But is our belief, therefore, a blind belief? Certainly not. We can furnish our reasons for our belief as well as the Critic can his for his unbelief. We do not condemn argument, but the *principle* from which argument proceeds. *That principle is the negative.* Hence, while the Critic in the negative state goes in search of reasons why the Bible is *not* the Word of God, those who are in the affirmative stage go in search of reasons why it *is* the Word of God; and confirm themselves in this belief by the following rational considerations:

That by the Word man has connection with God and heaven; that all things in nature correspond with spiritual things, inasmuch as they answer to some spiritual principle of goodness as to their qualities and the use they are or benefit they produce; that spiritual things do not appear as they really are; that the ideas of interior thought are altogether different from natural ideas, which partake of the limitations of space and are embodied in expressions of speech; that man, even during his abode in the world, may be in heaven (Luke xvii, 21), inasmuch as he was born to live in both; that an influx of a certain Divine light attends some persons, flowing into their intellects and affections while the Word is being read; that it is necessary something should be written which came down from heaven, and that consequently what is so written cannot be such in its origin as it is in the letter; that nothing can be holy but by virtue of a holiness from within.

They may confirm themselves herein by scien-

tific considerations also; as by the following: that in ancient times men were principled in the doctrine of types and representives; that the writings of the ancient Church, and for the same reason, the writings of several amongst the Gentiles, were according to such doctrine; and that from this ground the style of those writings became venerable, and was esteemed in the Church as holy, and among the heathen as learned. The books of several authors may likewise be appealed to as instances of this kind of writing. Yet those who are in a *negative* principle, if they do not deny all this, still do not believe it. Then, what is the difference between those who from an affirmative principle investigate religious truth, and those who, like the Critics, take nothing for granted until it is proved? The difference is, that the former enter from truths into rational and scientific things; the latter enter from rational and scientific things into truths. Those who are in an affirmative principle—that is, who believe what is contained in the Word to be true because the Lord has declared it—are in such a state of mind, that their faith may be continually confirmed, and their ideas be illustrated and corroborated by rational and scientific things,—by things of sense.

Moreover, the methods by which Critics proceed to inquire into the Divine inspiration of Scripture is the same by which many would inquire into the doctrines of faith, and the method ends in the same results.

To respect the doctrine of faith from the mere

principles of man's wisdom is, not to believe the Word or doctrine thence deduced before there is a persuasion wrought from a rational ground that it is true; whereas, to view the principles agreeable to reason from the doctrine of faith is, first to believe the Word or doctrine thence deduced, and afterwards to confirm the same from things rational. The former case is *inverted order*—the consequence is that nothing is believed; but the latter case is genuine order, which produces a fuller belief.

The former method is pursued by the Rationalist, but is the same which, as we have seen, is pursued by the Critic. The same method, in both cases, leads to the same result—that of denial; and hence we see how Critics and Rationalists go hand-in-hand with each other. The Critic becomes Rationalist, and the Rationalist Critic, and the one is ever helping the other.

When man from reason unenlightened by the Spirit of God thinks of Divine things, he can by no means believe that such things are; as well because such reason does not comprehend them, as because the appearances which have birth from the fallacies of the senses adhere to it, by which and from which man thinks.

The difference between the Critic and the Rationalist on one side, and ourselves on the other, consists in this: that the former proceeds from a negative whilst we assume an affirmative principle. The question then arises, What is the affirmative principle? Can we give any rational account of it? Yes, my friends. There is such a thing as the

philosophy of a belief in the Divine inspiration of Scripture—a philosophy which opposes to the negations of the Critic the positive truths which relate to the regenerate life.

On both sides it is admitted that love to God and to our neighbour comprehends all religion; that whatever has not relation to this, is not religious truth, and as such is no part of the Word of God.

Thus Dr. Milman (History of the Jews, Preface, p. 11): "The moral and religious truth, and this "alone, I apprehend, is the Word of God con- "tained in the Sacred Writings. I know no pas- "sage in which this emphatic term is applied to "any sentence or saying which does not convey or "enforce such truth." Thus Dr. Colenso (Natal Sermons, p. 10, Pentateuch, pp. 269, 415): "We "must consider for what end the Bible is given to "us, namely, to bring our spirits near to God; and "we must seek, therefore, the proofs of the inspi- "ration of its writers, not in matters of Science or "History, but in those words of eternal life which "come to us with a power that is not of this world, "and find us out in our inner being, with messages "from God to the soul."

That the Word is the doctrine of love to the Lord and love to our neighbour, is taught by what the Lord said, that upon these two precepts hang all the Law and the Prophets.

The Word, therefore, is the doctrine of love, the affections of which lie concealed in its expressions, and have nothing in common with worldly and corporeal affections, in which man is immersed during

his life in the body; for they are affections of spiritual and heavenly love, which man is the less capable of perceiving by reason that few are principled in them; and those few are, for the most part, persons of simplicity of character, who cannot reflect upon their affections. The rest of mankind know little what this genuine affection is.

These heavenly affections are contained in charity towards our neighbour and in love towards God. By persons who are not principled in them, they are believed to have nothing of substance or reality in them, when, nevertheless, they fill the universal heaven, for all who are there must be imbued with them, in ineffable variety. Such affections, with their varieties, are what are stored up in the inner or spiritual sense of the Word, and lie concealed therein, not only in each series, but in each expression, yea, in each *jot or tittle*; whence we may understand that saying of our Lord: "Till heaven and earth pass, *one jot or one tittle* shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." (Matt. v, 18.)

Well, then, the Word is holy as to every jot and tittle, because the jots and tittles are signs signifying holy affections. I do not say that copies of the Word may not require correction; it would be a miracle if they did not; but will you, in order to settle the text, entrust these jots and tittles, signifying holy affections, into the hands of a Critic, who does not know what they mean, and tells you that religion has nothing to do with the subject? And yet they are, at least in this day, a part of the

Hebrew language; and if in this day they are part of the Hebrew language, and the Critic does not know what they mean, how can he be said to be master of the language? Is there not something mysterious, after all, in that language as it is in the Word, which he is unable to fathom, and as such does not understand?

The whole Word, then, we see, is the doctrine of love—*the doctrine of the affections.* What a doctrine to be learned from historical researches, the revelations of science, or grammatical criticism! Let us say, then, to the Critic in the present stage of the inquiry,—Leave the Bible alone; do not first of all resolve Scripture into matters of history, science, or oriental imagination; and having done this, retort upon us the truth common to both, that it is only the moral and religious element that is the Word of God. We admit that as well as you; but how is the moral and religious element to be found out? How but by the affections, and first of all, but by the affection for truth? These affections delight to go in search of truth, and will discover a moral and religious element where your Criticism could find none. We do not want to find out the moral and religious element after you have criticised, but before. We take the Bible as it is; and after we have found out the moral and religious element, we may learn from Criticism whatever is worthy to be learned; then, and not till then. Therefore, do not begin with Criticism, and give us only a small fraction of the Word, and tell us that this is all that

constitutes the Word; for in the present stage of the inquiry you have no business with the subject at all. Wait your proper time, and we will hear what you say, and perhaps may desire to turn Critics ourselves.

Meanwhile, how shall we ascertain the moral and religious element?

We have already seen that this moral and religious element has relation to the *affections*. It is in these affections towards God that the affirmative principle is to be found—love from God in man, recognizing God's love to man; and when these affections prevail, man receives goodness from God, which causes *affirmation*, and by which he perceives that *so it is*. This goodness cannot be received by a negative or doubting person. The love of good, when received from God, manifests itself after this way: that man is affected with truth, or begins to be delighted with it; at first in that he knows it, and next in that he acts according to it. Now, in so far as the Critic is in a negative principle, it is very obvious that this love of good cannot flow into his thoughts; for this good is affirmative, not negative. It is the simple or single-minded and the innocent into which this good flows. And what is its function? It is the principle of good derived from the love of God by which a man *perceives*, and the principle of truth derived from the wisdom of God by which he *thinks*. Good appertains to love and its affections; consequently, thence is *perception*; and truth ap-

pertains to faith, consequently, *thought* originates in it. The perception, then, of truth depends upon the state of the affections, and it is in the affections that the affirmative principle consists. You will observe, therefore, that in this case Criticism has nothing to do with originating the perception of truth, although the perception of truth may lead to a right criticism. To criticize without a perception of the truth is to criticize in the dark. It is possible that a person may be in this affirmative state, and that if the Critic ask him the reason why he believes the Bible to be the Word of God, he cannot give any beyond this: it fills him with such a holy love—such inward peace and consolation, that he is ready with the Psalmist to say, "Oh! how I love Thy law; it is my delight "all the day long." "I opened my mouth and "drew in my breath, for my delight is in Thy commandments." This is the affirmative principle, which is in the will, and thence in the intellect. It is the *yea, yea* and the *nay, nay* into which all perception of Divine Truth is ultimately resolvable. As such, it is before, above, and beyond all criticism, all history, all science, all natural reason; it is the I AM saying to the soul It is, and the soul perceiving in the dictate, It is, the presence of the I AM. But because we say that it is above and beyond all natural reason, do we therefore dispense with natural reason? Certainly not; for the affirmative affections descend into the natural reason, and enable it rationally to perceive what is truth

and what is not. The truth so perceived is in harmony with the affections. The affirmative principle first perceives the doctrine of the love of God; the natural reason then receives it; and the life of man is then subordinated to it. Then it is that the man himself may, if he please, become scientific; for he then knows how to make use of his science. Then, we repeat, and not till then; for if he exercises his critical powers before, he will repudiate as the Word of God what the affections of a devout mind regard as that Word. What will appear to him more absurd than to maintain that the style of the Word is of such a nature as to contain what is holy in every verse, in every word, and, in some cases, in every letter? Assuredly, we know that the chapters of Genesis which Augustine regarded as treating of the New Creation, the Critic regard as legendary: the Flood, which we at least regard as treating of a flood of wickedness, the Critic regards as legendary; the narrative concerning the Tabernacle, which pious minds have revered as setting forth the pattern of things in the heavens, the Critic regards as legendary: prophetical language, which they have regarded as replete with Divine Truths, the Critic regards as mere Orientalisms, hyperbolical and extravagant. To the Critic, what is little in the Scripture, is too little; it is mean and frivolous: what is great is often fanciful and imaginative; what is supernatural is natural only, and superstitious. It cannot be otherwise: for where science is made the arbiter of revelation, the natural the arbiter of

the spiritual, the inferior of the superior, the outer of the inner, truth descends from heaven only to be trampled into the dust. All is of the earth, earthy. The profound scholar, the remorseless Critic, the wise, and the great, and the glorified of this world are but trailing their talents and science along the dust of the earth: and while they are proclaiming to Christendom their historical researches, their analytical knowledge of languages, and imperatively demanding the surrender of whole books of the Word of God, and unconditional submission to their own dictates, that has come to pass of which it is written, "Behold, I will send serpents, cock-"atrices, among you, which will not be charmed, "and they shall bite you, saith the Lord." "The "Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of "deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes; the pro-"phets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered." (Jer. viii, 17; Is. xxix, 10.) A *serpent* denotes reasoning from the senses concerning Divine truth.

Therefore, we say to the Critic, denounce as you may the Jewish belief in the sanctity of the Scriptures as a Masoretic superstition, still, for aught you know, it is a superstition which may have its place in the counsels of Divine Providence. For aught you know, it was of Divine Providence that the Jews were led by this very superstition so carefully to preserve the text of Scripture, and that for this very reason they have themselves been preserved to the present day; for to this present day, when Christians would almost totally reject

the Word, they maintain a particular reverence for the Word of the Old Testament.

The nature and results, therefore, of Modern Criticism, we may assume, have been foreseen and provided for by the Lord. The Hebrew nation has been preserved for the sake of the Hebrew language and superstition. That superstition, with all its errors, God has preferred to Modern Criticism. Had the Jewish nation been annihilated at the destruction of Jerusalem, what would have become of the Jewish language? It would now be a language as dead as it would be unknown; for if, while the Jews have been preserved, and have cultivated the study of the language, the Christian Church has notwithstanding greatly neglected it, what would have been the case if the Jewish nation had been cut off? The language would not only have been dead, but buried; and what, then, would have become of the Hebrew text of our Bible? We should scarcely know whether we have a Hebrew Bible or not. But, as in times of old, the Lord preserved the posterity of Abraham that they might be witnesses to the one true God, so has he preserved them throughout the Christian era that they might be witnesses to the written Word of God. Their reverence for outward ritual was no impediment to their calling, but the very reason of it; their reverence for the text of the written Word was no impediment to the preservation of the people, but the very reason of it. Look down upon their notions with derision as we may, the Lord has preserved their

tradition to counteract our science, their superstition to counteract our learning, their bibliolatry to counteract our criticism, their outward veneration to counteract our inward and outward contempt.

You will see, therefore, why it is that we have no faith in Modern Criticism, conducted as it is, whether in relation to the text or its interpretation; why we conceive it to be founded upon false principles; and why, in the face of all that it has shown or can show to the contrary, we may rationally, faithfully, and boldly maintain—that "it is owing to the spiritual sense that the Word "is divinely inspired and holy in every syllable, "and that the *style of the Word* is of such a "nature as to contain what is holy in every verse, "in every word, and in some cases in every letter."

Here, then, we come to the last battle—the sharp sword, the rod of iron, and the wine-press of Armageddon; we say the last battle—a battle between the Word of God and the Critics; for Criticism can scarcely go further than it has. You have seen how modern Criticism would introduce a new era by the work of *destruction*. We propose to show you a way of introducing a new era by destroying the destroyer, and effecting a work of *restoration*,—for that a new era for the Church has already set in is admitted on all sides. That a new era should set in, and that the old should continue, is impossible. If the old era consisted in old truths, or old views of truth, the new era will consist in new truths, or new views of truth; new, because, as we shall have occasion to show,

they are simply older than the old, and being older have been forgotten; and being forgotten, when they are restored appear to be new. As the conflict now is between the literal sense *alone*, or so much of it as Criticism has left remaining, and the existence of a spiritual sense concealed under the natural sense, I propose to point out the relation of the literal and spiritual senses to each other; particularly as Criticism has attempted to separate the two, and then left them both to fight for their very existence.

The moral and religious element, then, is comprehended, as we have said, in these two commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with "all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself;" on these two essentials hang all the Law and the Prophets. Now, love to God *in* man is love *from* God in man. We love Him because He first loved us, and as his love comes down to us through the medium of the Incarnation, so the commandment to love God with all our heart is immediately connected with this doctrine of the Incarnation; and it is evident, therefore, that the whole of the inmost sense of Scripture, as treating of this love, must have relation to the Incarnation. The connection, then, of the spiritual sense with the natural is founded upon the doctrine of the Incarnation,—the connection of Divinity with Humanity; and, accordingly, we have seen that those who have been foremost to deny the connection of the literal sense with the spiritual have been foremost to deny the connection of the Humanity with the

Divinity. It is the connection of the literal sense with the spiritual that is the origin of the sanctity of the literal sense. The spiritual sense is inspired into the literal; the literal sense thus becomes inspired, and all Scripture thus Divinely inspired is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness.

Now the love of truth, in a sincere mind, will always seek out a truth higher than itself, and as loving that truth will seek to be one with it, and being one with it, thus to become elevated. The elevation of the affections, therefore, wherever there is a desire for this elevation, is effected only by means of spiritual truth. If there be no truth higher than the affections, there is no elevation of the affections; natural affections remain natural, and never can become spiritual. We are exhorted to set our affections on things above; but, in so far as there is nothing above, there is nothing upon which to set our affections, no higher truth that we can love, and consequently no ascent or elevation of the affections; and if there can be no ascent of the affections because there is no spiritual truth, there can be no descent of the spirit of truth; and if there be no descent of the spirit of truth, there can be no communication of the Church with Heaven; for there can be no ascent where there is no descent; nothing can ascend into heaven but that which has first come down from heaven. In this point of view, the result of Modern Criticism, as founded upon the principle of a single sense, is to stop the communication be-

tween heaven and earth; in other words, to close the Church in heaven against the Church upon earth, in which case it hath ceased to be true that we are come to an innumerable "company of "angels."

And why is this? Because the kingdom of heaven became opened to the Church upon earth in the person of the Lord Himself; in the revelations of the Divinity to the Humanity, of the Father to the Son; and this in virtue of the fulfilment of the Scriptures in and by the Sonship of the Humanity. The fulfilment of the Scriptures! What Scriptures? Did the Father reveal to the Son that the stories in Scripture concerning the Creation and the Flood are purely legendary? That the narrative concerning the Tabernacle is puerile, and that He never gave any instructions concerning it? That the Mosaic Law had little or no meaning for others than the Jews? That the Psalms and Prophets are replete with exaggerations and "prophecies never intended to be ful-"filled?" And that a great part of the Old Testament had no more to do with Christian religion than had the Greek and Roman history? Were those the tidings which angels carried from the Father to the Son; this the fulfilment of the words, "Hereafter shall ye see the heavens "opened, and the angels of God ascending and "descending upon the Son of Man?" Oh, no, friends! "At what period," asks Dr. Colenso (Pentateuch, p. 22), "of our Lord's life upon earth "is it to be supposed that He had granted to Him,

"as the Son of Man, *supernaturally*, full and "accurate information on these points; so that "He could be expected to speak about the Pen- "tateuch in other terms than any other devout "Jew of that day would have employed? Why "should it be thought that He would speak with "certain *Divine* knowledge on this matter more "than upon other matters of ordinary science or "history?" Thus you see that, had our Modern Scientific Theologians lived in the time of our Lord, they could have given Him information about these matters, which both the Father and the angels failed to give?

The time, then, has come for a last and mighty struggle. I say a last; for it is impossible for Criticism to go further, doubting or denying, as it has done, even the fact of our Lord's Resurrection.

We have arrived at the question, What, then, is the nature of the communication between the Father and the Son? We know that there were occasions on which it was actually overheard and seen by the disciples,—as at the Baptism, the Transfiguration, and the answer to the prayer, "Father, glorify Thy Son," when a voice came from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it, and "will glorify it again; and some said it thun- "dered; others said an angel spake to Him." Of those who heard the voice, some resolved it into a natural phenomenon, some into a supernatural. There is the same tendency to naturalize the supernatural or spiritual in the present day. What is the meaning of the words, "The Lord

"also thundered out of heaven, and the Highest "gave His voice;" "The voice of the Lord is "mighty in operation; the voice of the Lord is a "glorious voice;" "The God of glory thundereth?"

The Scientific Theologian informs us that Judea was often visited by thunderstorms, and that a geographical description may be given of the course pursued by the storm through the wilderness referred to in the twenty-ninth Psalm. (See Stephen's Defence of Dr. R. Williams, p. 274.) Others, on the other hand, assign a spiritual sense to this Psalm, and regard the thunder as representing the voice of the Word of God, as in the comment of Le Blanc, and also some Protestant commentaries. The supernatural interpretation may be taken as referring the voice to a cause above Nature, namely, Divine Truth, or the Word in its power destroying all wickedness; the wilderness being the Church, where there is nothing left of either goodness or truth. It was *the like voice* which some interpreted as that of *thunder*, and others that of *an angel;* indeed, both the "thunder" and the "angel" mark the various modes in which the same Divine Truth was apprehended. "Hence," observes Origen (Lauretus, Art. Angelus), "an angel is a messenger; and as "he is a messenger of God to man, so may the "term signify the Divine or prophetic Word, in "which are announced to us things divine. These "angels or messengers shall come to judgment "with Christ, because we shall be judged by the "Word of God. Thus it may be taken to signify

"the Word of God;" and, we may also add, the truth of the Word. Philo observes (On Dreams, sec. 12, 23) that angels ascending and descending are thoughts concerning earthly and heavenly things; and Jerome and Augustine, that an angel speaking in the prophet is the prophetic Word; and Gregory the Great and others, that the ascent and descent of angels is the contemplation of God, and of the Divinity and Humanity of the Lord. It is very obvious, therefore, that Jacob's vision of the *ladder* reaching from heaven to earth, and on which angels were seen ascending and descending, represented a process of ascending and descending thought; in the person of our Lord Himself, thought from the Divinity to the Humanity, and from the Humanity to the Divinity; nay, further, since the glorification of the Humanity the process of infinite and eternal thinking in the Divine Humanity concerning the salvation and felicity of His creatures. It is true that Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature; but this does not place him on the level of a devout Jew. The initial point from which the increase began was the Divinity which was within, and which therefore from the first elevated the Humanity into a sphere of perception above any attainable without the process of a miraculous conception. In this case our Lord would not need be instructed by Rabbis; knowledge and science would come to Him from within, by His own Divinely-originated perceptions,—gradually it might be, yet from an inward source higher than is attainable by angels or

men. From the inward elevation of that Divine instinctive perception He could always look down upon the outward sphere of human science or knowledge; there was in Him no such thing as learning, science, knowledge, separated from the Divine Love; but whilst He was in outermost knowledge, He could also be in the bosom of the Father; and if the angelic ladder within thus reached from first principles to last, it was that He Himself might be the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last. There was to be no human abasement below Him, nor any angelic exaltation above Him; but Divine communication was to be for ever established between the highest elevation and the lowest abasement; that there might be no angelic wisdom which came not from Him, no human sorrow which might not be reached, no depth of darkness which might not be illuminated, no hell that might not become a heaven, except in so far as hell should prefer itself to heaven.

We see, then, in the person of our Lord, the connection between the Church in Heaven, and the Church upon Earth, namely, in the *ladder* reaching from heaven to earth, from the first to the last. In the Lord, as the beginning and ending of all creation, all things find their unity, their order, and their place; and He it is that disposes the angels into order for the communication of His truth to mankind. All this we find revealed to us; thus in Isaiah we read, "*I am the first and I* "*am the last;* also my hand hath founded *the*

"*earth*, and my right hand hath spanned the "*heaven: I convoke them; they stand together*" (xlviii, 12, 13); where the *hand* and *right hand* of Jehovah, or of the Lord, denote omnipotence; the *earth* which He has founded is what is last or ultimate; the *heaven* which he stretched out is what is between the first and the last; to *convoke* them that they may stand together, denotes to hold together all interior things in connection and form by what is last, that they may look to one end. The one end to which they are to look is He who is the First and The Last. That he is the Lord is manfest from Isaiah: "Thus saith "Jehovah, *the King of Israel, and his Redeemer* "*the Lord of Hosts, I am the First and I am* "*the Last*" (xliv, 6); where the King of Israel denotes the Lord (John xviii, 37). That the Redeemer is the Lord is evident. Again, in the Revelation, "These things saith the First and the Last, *who was dead and is alive* again." That the first holds together all things in connection by or through the last may be manifest from the *Word* and from *man*. The Word in its last sense is that of the letter; and the Word in its first principles is the Lord; and the Word in its spiritual or inner sense is perceived in the heavens, and has this effect, that the angels look to the one end, which is the Lord. As to what concerns *man*, man as the lowest is the Church in the earth; man in the highest or first principles is the Lord; man as possessing the principles of the Church is heaven, for the Church and heaven before the Lord is one

man. There is a continual connection and influx according to connection of all things from the Lord through the heavens to the Church in the earth. By the heavens are meant the angels who are there; by the Church, men who are true men of the Church; and by man in first principles, the Lord as to His Divine Humanity. Thus from the First by or through the Last all things are held together in connection, and stand together.

It is clear, therefore, that in order for the literal sense to maintain its existence as an inspired writing and part of the Word of God, the lowest sense must be connected with the highest, — the Last with the First, and the First with the Last. Disconnected from that sense, the letter loses its life and its sanctity, nay, as we have seen, in the estimate of the Critic, even its literal veracity. The connection between the lowest or last sense, or that of the letter, with its first or supreme sense, is represented, as we have seen, by a *ladder;* the truths brought by angels are messages brought by messengers; and the ascent and descent of these truths are the process of a man's thought when reading the Word. The truths which a man reads become truths which are spoken within him; he is brought into communication with an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect; no wonder, therefore, that he should say, "Oh! how I love thy Law."

If, now, the ascent and descent of angels to man represent the process of man's thought, it is evident that the ladder which they ascend and

descend must represent corresponding gradations in the human mind. There are degrees or steps, as of a ladder, from inmost principles to outermost (in which is the sensuous principle). Into the inmost there flows good from the Lord; and this, through the rational principle into the interior natural principle, and thence through the interior natural or sensual principle distinctly, as it were by the steps or degrees of a ladder; and in every step or degree it receives a quality according to the reception.

To illustrate the case. A child cannot think from any higher principle than from that of sense, for he forms his ideas from the things of sense; but when he comes to maturer age, and from things of sense forms conclusions as to causes, he then begins to think from what may be called the interior natural principle; for from the things of sense he gets some truths, which transcend the things of sense, but still remain within those things which are in Nature. But as he grows up, if he cultivates his rational principle, he forms from those things which are in the interior natural principle, principles of a still higher degree—principles of reasoning. The ideas of thought hence derived are called in the learned world intellectual and immaterial ideas; whereas the ideas derived from the science or knowledge of each natural principle, so far as they originate in the world by means of the senses, are called material ideas. Thus it is that in the understanding

man *mounts up* from the world towards heaven. Nevertheless, he does not by the understanding enter into heaven, unless he receives that good or love of the Lord, which is continually present and flowing in from the Lord ; but if he receives that principle of good, he is furthur gifted with corresponding truths, for all truth abides in good ; and in proportion as he is gifted with truths, so he is gifted with understanding, in virtue of which he is in heaven.

We here see the method by which man ascends by orderly gradations from the things of sense, as from the lowest step of the ladder, to higher and still higher heavenly truths, till at last he comes to think in accordance with angels, and from angelic principles descends to the things of time and sense. Hence man has communication with heaven, insomuch that, while he lives in love to the Lord and in charity towards his neighbour, the kingdom of heaven is within him, as the Lord Himself teaches in St. Luke, "Behold the kingdom of God is within you."

To *rest* in the letter of the Word is, for the most part, to rest in the merely sensuous principle. This being the case, and science having relation to the intellect, it is evident that science stands higher than the Bible in the degree in which science is above sense ; and this is one reason why scientific theologians so often speak of the revelations of science shedding light from above upon the alleged historical narratives of the Bible ; whereas in the

case of spiritual interpretation, when the literal sense passes into the spiritual, such things as relate to persons, places, and the world, are succeeded by such things as relate to the Lord and the Church.

To account the Scripture holy, and yet to deny its spiritual sense, is mere Bibliolatry; and this is the real origin of the charge of Bibliolatry so frequently made in the present day, in which point of view the charge is a just one. For, apart from the spirit, the letter is dead; and in this case, to venerate the letter is to make an idol of that which is dead. There is such a thing, therefore, as Biblical idolatry. There is no real difference in this case between the *cultus* of dead saints and the *cultus* of a dead sanctity; for without the spirit, the sanctity of the Bible is as dead as the saints. Hence, historical facts alone by no means constitute the Word of God; because in them, separated from the spiritual sense, there is no more of divinity than in any other history; the spiritual sense alone is that which makes the narrative Divine. This, indeed, has been openly affirmed by the Bishop of St. David's (Charge for 1863, p. 123), and echoed by the Bishop of Natal: "A great part of the "events related in the Old Testament has no more "apparent connection with religion, than those "of the Greek and Roman history. The numbers, "migrations, wars, battles, conquests, and reverses "of Israel have nothing in common with the "teaching of Christ, with the way of salvation,

" with the fruits of the Spirit. They belong to a " totally different order of subjects."

If this be the case, the worship of the letter is but the worship of the golden calf.

Now, according to the interpretation of ancient writers, *Moses* represented *The Law* (St. Luke xvi, 29, Origen, *Homily* 3, 4, on Exod., *Glossa Ordinaria*, Ambrose, *De Abrahamo*, chap. 10, art. 74); and when he went up on the mountain and entered into the cloud which covered the mountain, he represented the elevation of the Law to its spiritual sense. His being, as it seemed, lost in the cloud, and thus hidden from the view of the Jewish people, represented the concealment from that people of the spiritual sense. And, therefore, when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from out of the mount, or when there was no descent of spiritual truth in their minds, they had recourse to Aaron as their teacher, and said " Up, make us gods which shall go before us ;" furnish us with the graven images of sensuous teaching, such as are suited to our external notions of religion at the foot of the mountain; for as to this Moses who is gone up to its summit, as to the Law in its spiritual sense, we wot not what is become of it; we cannot see it; we know nothing about it; it is altogether lost in the clouds. Thus it is that the people at the foot of the mountain, and Moses at the summit, represent the separation of the lowest from the highest sense, or of the external sense from the spiritual. And he who separates the inner sense of the Word, of the Church, and of

worship, from the external, separates from it the holy Divine principle. For the internal of these things is their spirit; but the external is the body of that spirit; and the body without the spirit is dead. To worship, therefore, what is dead, is to worship an idol; in this case, to worship a golden calf, and to proclaim a feast to it, and to make the people dissolute. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play," —indicating an indifference and aversion to all spiritual things. Such is the state to which the Church is now reduced by a rejection of the spiritual sense of Scripture.

Without, therefore, impugning the merits of those who have defended the letter of the Word against those Critics who have assailed it, it must be evident, upon the principle here explained, that, even supposing them to have shown that Dr. Davidson, Dr. Colenso, and all others of that school are in error; yet, in so far as they have separated the literal sense from the spiritual, and thus treated the literal sense apart from its inspiration, and yet regarded the Bible as holy, they certainly incur the charge of idolatry; for apart from the spiritual sense, the letter has no more life than an *idol;* and to reverence the Bible as if in this case it were holy, is mere Bibliolatry. And how, in this case, can we be surprised at the language of Dr. Colenso? (Pentateuch, p. 155), "It may be, rather "it is, as I believe, undoubtedly, the fact that God "Himself, by the power of the Truth, will take "from us in this age the Bible as an *idol,* which

" we have set up against His will, to bow down to " it and worship it." As at the time of the French Revolution, theologians had to contend for the very existence of a God, so in the present age have they to contend for the very existence of a Word of God; and unless the Church acknowledge the spiritual life of that Word, into the hands of the Critics that Word must fall, and be taken away from the Church altogether; nothing can save it, or even save the Church from the fulfilment of the prophecy, "*Behold, I come as a Thief.*"

Now that scientific theologians are releasing the Church from the shackles of the old Bibliolatry, we are told that a new theology has sprung into existence. Let us hear Dr. Colenso's account of it, " Why is this religious teaching rightly called new? " Not because it is new in the sense of being dif- " ferent from the old; for, in fact, it is only a re- " newing of the old, a return to *primitive truth*, a " renovation of that which has been corrupted and " deformed by age, a fresh breaking forth of the " spring of living water, which has been choked " up and covered over with rubbish and decaying " matter."

A return to *primitive truth?* That the *well* has been choked up and covered over with rubbish and decaying matter, we readily agree; but when it is affirmed that the doctrine of a single sense is a return to primitive truth, as being a return to the *old wells* which were dug by the servants of Abraham, and afterwards reopened by Isaac, this, we shall perceive, it does not even pretend to be; for

according to Modern Criticism, the wells opened by Abraham and reopened by Isaac were only wells in the historical sense—wells of pure material water, for the sake of supplying the flocks and herds of the patriarchs. The New Theology is founded upon a single or literal sense. We proceed to show that *the return to real primitive truth* is no other than a return to the spiritual sense, and that it is in this return to the spiritual sense, as contained with or conveyed by the literal, that will be accomplished a genuine Reformation of the Church.

Accordingly, we proceed to the narrative concerning the old wells of Abraham, reopened by Isaac, and from which Isaac afterwards effected a series of retreats, foreshadowing the gradual withdrawal of the Church from primitive truth. (Genesis xxvi, 15, &c.)

" For all the wells which his father's servants
" had digged in the days of Abraham his father,
" the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them
" with earth. And Abimelech said unto Isaac,
" 'Go from us; for thou art much mightier than
" we.' And Isaac departed thence, and pitched
" his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.
" And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which
" they had digged in the days of Abraham his
" father; for the Philistines had stopped them
" after the death of Abraham; and he called their
" names after the names by which his father had
" called them. And Isaac's servants digged in the
" valley, and found there a well of springing water.

" And the herdsmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's " herdsmen, saying, The water is ours; and he " called the name of the well *Esek*; because they " strove with him. And they digged another well; " and strove for that also; and he called the name " of it *Sitnah*. And he removed from thence, and " digged another well; and for that they strove " not; and he called the name of it *Rehoboth*; and " he said: For now the Lord hath made room for " us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."

What, now, is the spiritual interpretation of this narrative, as given by Dr. Wordsworth, a great advocate of Catholic antiquity?

" Here," says he, " is a type of what Christ, the " true Isaac, does in the Church. The wells of " ancient truth have been choked by error, but " Christ reopens them, and restores them to the " primitive state, and calls them by their old names. " The law of marriage given by God to the Father " at the Creation had been corrupted by the evil " practice of men; but Christ, the Son of God, " restored it to its original purity, and made it once " more a well-spring of holy love and joy. (Matt. " xix, 8.) Christ is ever performing in His Church " this work of reopening ancient wells that have " been stopped up by Philistines; and to call them " by their old names is the essence of all true " Church reformation. Wells are stopped up by " Philistines wherever heresy and superstition " prevail; but Christ reopens them, and makes " them flow again with the living spiritual waters " of primitive Scriptural truth. (Ps. lxv, 10;

" lxxxiv, 6; John iv, 10, 14.) Genuine reforma-
" tion is never an act of innovation, but always a
" work of restoration."

Dean Stanley, on the Jewish Church, observes on Gen. xiii, 7, that there was the first primeval pastoral controversy; and that " the Father of the " faithful replied in language which might well " extend beyond the strife of herdsmen and shep-" herds, to the strife of pastors and teachers in " many a church and nation." The names of the three wells he interprets as being *Calumny, Strife,* and *Latitude*, p. 31.

Our Lord, therefore, in reopening the old wells, only revived the ancient method of interpretation, by which His Church upon earth might be brought again into consort with His Church in heaven. Accordingly, how did His Church upon earth, in reopening the old wells, interpret the narrative we are now considering? Let us take the interpretations of the spiritual sense as given by the Fathers from the Sylva Sylvarum of Lauretus. Origen treates the subject at large in Homily 13 on Genesis:

" They who *dig* for treasure are they who seek " for internal peace and wisdom. As where it is " said: If thou *seekest* for wisdom as for silver, " and *diggest* for her as for treasure." (Art. *Fodore. Gregory, Bede, Rupertus.*)

" The Philistines who stopped up the wells with " earth, are Jews who give carnal and earthly senses " to the Law; and especially the Scribes and Pha-

" risees." (Art. *Palestina. Origen, Bede, Jerome, Rupertus.*)

" The Philistines who stopped up the wells are " heretics who obscure the truth of the Scriptures." *(Origen, Jerome, Gregory, Rupertus.)*

" The earth with which the wells were filled " designates earthly and carnal meanings, as also " earthly thoughts." (Art. *Terra. Origen, Hilary, Augustine,* &c.)

" The wells which were dry and stopped up " signify the teaching of the Law understood in a " carnal sense." (Art. *Puteus, Obturare. Ambrose.*)

" The well that was dug signifies the depth of the " Law, which teachers dig open with the spade of " their tongue when they first clear away all earthly " thoughts from the mind, and come to spiritual " thoughts, and at length arrive at that depth of the " wisdom and knowledge of God which eye hath " not seen." (Art. *Puteus. Origen, Ambrose, Chrysostom.)*

" Isaac dug again the same wells, when Christ " opened the mysteries of the Law and of the " Prophets, and which the Devil endeavoured to " cover over." (Art. *Puteus. Bede.*)

" The fountains of salvation are the Sacred Scrip- " tures, or both the Testaments. The Sacred " Scripture is called a *well*, on account of the " depth of its mysteries ; a *fountain*, on account " of the flowing forth of its charity. These foun- " tains heretics and unbelievers stop up, when they " procure that Holy Scripture shall not be un-

" derstood or taught." (Art. *Fons. Augustine, Jerome, Geor. Venet, Cyril, Bede.*)

" The shepherds of Gerar, *i.e.*, the shepherds " who claimed the water to themselves, are the " Jews who wished the Law to be observed in a " carnal sense. They are the Priests, Pharisees, " and Heretics, who are without understanding." (Art. *Pastores. Jerome, Augustine.)*

" To stop up the wells is to close up the spiritual " senses of Scripture, lest they should be perceived " by any one, or it is to avert the hearts of the " faithful from meditating on divine and spiritual " things." (Art. *Obturare. Origen, Hom.* 12 Gen.)

Stopping up the wells is " taking away the " spiritual meaning of Scripture, and persuading " men to receive only the carnal." *(Glossa Interlinea.)*

Now, what is the sum of all these interpretations ? That the shepherds or pastors of Gerar are spiritual pastors, who stop up the wells of spiritual truth or the spiritual interpretation of Scripture, with the earth or dust of mere literal interpretation or mere worldly knowledge and learning. The *wells* are the literal sense of the Word of God containing the spiritual sense, or the waters; the *digging* is searching and investigation ; the *Philistines* or *the Shepherds of Gerar* are the opponents of spiritual truth ; the *stopping up* of the wells is the denial or obliteration of the spiritual sense of the Word ; the *earth* or the *dust* is earthly or worldly interpretation ; Isaac is Christ, who reopens the old wells, or those spiritual truths which were

known and received among the ancients. Accordingly, these are the truths which at this day are obliterated, insomuch that it is scarcely known to any one that they ever existed.

That they are obliterated is clear; for in what modern commentaries can we find them? And why can we not find them? Because they contain an express condemnation of the modern system of interpretation, by which the spiritual sense is separated from the literal, and is not only doubted, but treated with contempt. The Church has hidden her face from it.

But what is it we learn from these patristic interpretations? That on one side there is a repeated attempt to reopen the spiritual interpretation of Scripture, and on the other a repeated attempt to stop the proceeding. And what is the cause of the opposition? The pastors of Gerar said, "*We have "the waters;* it is we who know the truth; we "who teach it; we who are the hereditary owners; "the waters are *our* property; they belong not to "you; and rather than the well should pass into "your hands, or that your interpretations should "prevail, the well shall be stopped up with dust." Here, then, was a display of selfishness, worldliness, and jealousy. The pastors of Gerar would rather ignore or deny spiritual truth altogether, than that power should pass out of their hands, and any one else teach beside themselves. In consequence of the contention thus arising, Isaac calls the well Esek, a well of *contention;* and, upon the same principles, have not the Scriptures them-

selves become ESEK—a well of contention; and the pastors of Churches become the shepherds of Gerar?

Accordingly, Isaac moves away still farther from the well of primitive truth originally opened by the servants of his father Abraham; yet the opening even of this remote well excites opposition, amounting to positive *hatred.* Isaac, in consequence, calls this well the well of *Aversion,* or *Hatred,* namely, SITNAH. The word SITNAH comes from the same root as SATAN; and therefore implies that the opening of the well of Scripture by spiritual interpretation was met by Satanic opposition. It is well—too well known, the ridicule, aversion, and loathing with which everything like spiritual interpretation has been received in the present day. Whatever partakes not of the baldest literalism is only "the rubbish of decep-" tion and error," "allegorical jargon," or "an out-" rage on the dictates of common sense." Let us hear what Origen says upon this subject (Homily 13 on Genesis).

"But also every one among ourselves who minis-" ters the Word of God, diggeth a well, and seeketh " living waters from which he may refresh his " hearers. But if I were to begin to discuss the " sayings of the ancients, and to seek in them a " spiritual sense; if I were to endeavour to remove " the veil from the Law, and to show that what is " written has an allegorical meaning, I should in-" deed in this case be digging wells; but imme-" diately the advocates of the letter only will be

"exciting calumnies against me, and lying in wait "for me, and be even preparing against me enmi- "ties and persecutions, denying that truth can "maintain any standing except in what is of the "earth. But let us, if we are the servants of Isaac, "love the wells and fountains of living water; let "us recede from these litigious and calumnious "people, and leave them in possession of the earth "of which they are so fond."

Even Matthew Henry, who was little given to allegorical interpretation, observes upon the subject:

"In our searches after truth, that fountain of "living water, it is good to make use of the dis- "coveries of former ages, which have been clouded "by the corruptions of later times. Inquire for the "old way, the wells which our fathers digged, "which the adversaries of truth have stopped. "'*Ask of thine elders and they shall teach thee.*' "Isaac's servants digged new wells. Note.— "Though we must use the light of former ages, it "does not follow, therefore, that we must rest in "it, and make no advances; we must still be "building upon their foundation, running to and "fro that knowledge may be increased. (Dan. "xii 4.—See the Prolegomena of Rupertus to the "Apocalypse.)"

"In digging his wells he met with much oppo- "sition. Those that open the fountains of truth "must expect contradiction. The two first wells "they digged were called *Esek* and *Sitnah, Con- "tention* and *Hatred.*"

Dr. Wordsworth, who, in his way, is most laudably endeavouring to revive the ancient principles of interpretation, observes upon this subject.

"The work of digging wells for the outgushing "of living water is a work not unattended with "struggles and conflicts against Heresy; and the "records of her striving for the faith are preserved "in the history of the Church. She has her *Eseks* "(contentions) and her *Sitnahs* (oppositions); for "she has received her charge to fight the good "fight of faith, and to contend earnestly for the "faith. But after her struggles comes peace; after "her *Eseks* or her *Sitnahs*, she has her *Rehoboths* "or enlargements."

The Heresies here referred to are those which are signified by *earth* or *dust*, as we have already seen; and therefore signify that false doctrine which arises from earthly or carnal interpretations of Scripture.

As the well ESEK is dug farther off from the original well opened by Abraham, and reopened by Isaac, so the well REHOBOTH is dug farther off from the well *Sitnah;* that is to say, the well of Scripture truth is opened farther off from the spiritual sense of the Word or primitive truth; and as the pastors of Gerar, who indulge only in earthly or carnal interpretations, raise no opposition to the well which is now opened, it is evident that the situation of the well is more in conformity with their own wishes, and, as such, answers to the external or literal sense of the Word; for which reason it is called REHOBOTH, or *Latitude*,

for Isaac said, "Now the Lord hath made room for "us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."

Ancient writers, when they speak of *altitude* or *profundity* as referring to the spiritual sense of Scripture, often regard *latitude* as referring to its literal sense; and it is in reference to the truth of the literal sense of Scripture that this word is to be interpreted. Accordingly, the well REHOBOTH is to be taken as signifying the truths of the Word in its literal sense. We have observed that Dr. Wordsworth interprets it as signifying "the peace "of the Church after fighting the good fight of "faith." But the narrative does not correspond with this view of the subject; for Isaac is ever retiring from the conflict, ever conceding, and ever receding. It is not the Church, but the enemies of the Church, that prevail; and the narrative indicates, therefore, rather a perpetual decline of the Church from spiritual interpretation to literal.

This decline had reached its lowest limit when our Lord came into the world. The Jewish Church had altogether lost sight of the spiritual sense of Scripture; and consequently of the spiritual nature of the First Advent. Our Lord came to reopen the old well which the Jewish Church had filled up with dust. The Apostles and their successors, the servants of Isaac, followed more or less His example. But even in the Christian Church there were pastors of Gerar. In early times appeared the Millenarians, filling the wells of prophecy with the dust of literal exposition. Then followed the reaction, or reopening the old wells by the school of

Origen. Then came Theodore and his school, filling up with dust the wells again. Then followed the reaction from Dionysius, Augustine, and others in succession, who, in their own way, endeavoured more or less to open them again; a state of things which continued down to the time of the Reformation, when the wells of spiritual truth were closed altogether.

Another well, therefore, was opened, over which the shepherds should hold no dispute. A single sense, *unicus sensus*,—that is to say, the literal sense alone,—was now insisted on; and thus, at the extreme distance from primitive truth, or from the ancient wells of Abraham and Isaac, was dug by the reformers the well REHOBOTH; so that in these days it has come to be thought a golden rule of interpretation, that where the literal sense will stand, the farthest from the literal should be regarded as the worst. The farthest from the literal are the ancient wells of Abraham.

"At the Reformation," says Bishop Marsh, "it "became a maxim amongst Protestants that the "words of Scripture had only *one* sense, and that "they who ascribed to them *various* senses made "the meaning of Scripture altogether uncertain. "It is true that a propensity to mystical meanings, "to which fanatics of every description are in- "variably attached, has displayed itself at various "times and in various places even in Protestant "countries. But such a manifold interpretation "of Scripture was then the exception, and not the

"rule, as it had been in the middle ages. The "great majority of Protestant commentators, es- "pecially they whose commentaries have been "employed in the original language of Scripture, "have made it their chief object to discover the "grammatical or literal sense." (*Criticism and "Interpretation of the Bible*, sect. 12, p. 506). Yes, and the grammatical and literal sense only; this is the meaning of the Bishop's remark.

The consequence is, the ancient wells of spiritual truth have been finally abandoned, and have sunk into disrepute, being known only under the discreditable names of *Esek* and *Sitnah*—subjects of doubt, disputation, and aversion. Hence it may appear how in process of time Wisdom retired from inmost things to outermost, and man removed himself from heaven, and at length descended even to the dust of the earth, wherein Wisdom is now made to consist.

Of this decline no one in the present day seems to be more painfully sensible than Dr. Wordsworth: "How different," says he, "was the treat- "ment which these Books (Kings) of the Old "Testament received from the ancient Church of "God! And, therefore, with regard to the inter- "pretation of Scripture, it must with sorrow be "confessed, that great is the *decline* of the nine- "teenth century, which boasts its intellectual illu- "mination. We have gained a good deal in philo- "logy, but how much have we lost in theology?"

This he says in reference to the present disas-

trous consequences flowing from the neglect of spiritual interpretation.

But it may be asked, if the well *Rehoboth*, as being farthest from the well of Abraham, represents the remoteness of literal from ancient spiritual interpretation, how shall we reconcile this with the words of Isaac, who called the well LATITUDE; for, said he, "Now the Lord hath made room for us, "and we shall be fruitful in the land"? Would not this imply that even the literal sense of the Word can be made productive?

Undoubtedly, there is water in the remoter well of *Rehoboth;* for it is from the literal sense that we must derive true doctrine: besides which, the moral sense and the spiritual sense are in some places the same with the literal. The literal sense, therefore, may afford scope, room, or *latitude* for many a youthful, many a pious mind, incapable of penetrating much beyond the surface; and doubtless many have been able to say since the times of the Reformation, "here we have found water." This has been the case with the commentaries of the Assembly, Burhitt, Matthew Henry, Gill, Scott, the Family Bible, nay even with Cajeton, Calmet, and others of the literalist school. The same also may be said of many writings which have been founded upon these interpretations of Scripture. We do not reject water drawn from such a well; only let us be sure it is drawn from this well; and is the genuine water of spiritual truth accommodated in the literal sense to the apprehension of the natural man.

But now comes the other side of the question. Useful as this kind of instruction has been, the Church has not been aware that, after all, it is the last stage of decline from primitive truth or the wisdom of the ancients; a decline which has continued more and more, till the advocacy of the merely literal sense has at length developed itself into a denial of the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures, a denial of the Second Advent, and of the Divine Humanity of the Lord.

"The History of the Old Testament," says Dr. Wordsworth (Gen. and Exod., Pref. pp. 5, 6), "appears to be often treated in our own days as if "it were little more than a common history. It is "often classed with the histories of ancient authors, "and is read and interpreted as such. Whenever "the Pentateuch is thus treated it cannot long "command the reverence it is entitled to receive."

"If we who profess Christianity do not recognise "the life-giving virtue of the Spirit in the Old "Testament, we cannot expect to retain the letter "of the Old Testament; we shall soon lose our be-"lief in its unity, integrity, veracity, and inspira-"tion; we shall become neither Christians nor "Jews, but sink into unbelief."

Whence, then, does this unbelief arise but from separating the letter from the spirit? The Lord is in the Word, and therefore the Word is divine in every tittle; this also is confessed and acknowledged by all who derive doctrine from the Word. Nevertheless, *they deny it in heart*, who acknow-

ledge no other holy principle in the Word than what appears in the letter; for such can perceive *nothing holy in the historical parts, nor in the prophetical*, except only a slight external sanctity in consequence of its being called holy; when yet there must needs be in it an interior holy principle, if it be divine, as to every point or tittle.

We have seen how the separation has been effected; how the sanctity of the literal sense has consequently been denied, nay, regarded as a superstition; how, as a matter of course, we are therefore called upon to revise or retract every theory of inspiration which is founded upon this principle. The reasons assigned are, that in consequence of the advance in Biblical Criticism and in science, the text is seen to be rendered uncertain by various readings and interpolations, the science to be that of an unscientific age, the history to be unhistorical, the morality immoral, and the prophetic announcements falsified by facts. This is actually the state to which the doctrine of a single sense has reduced Biblical interpretation in the present day. The well REHOBOTH, like the wells *Esek* and *Sitnah*, has itself now become a well of *contention* and *aversion*. The waters are failing, and the well undergoing the process of being choked with dust—the dust of earthly learning. The spiritual sense of Scripture having been denied and treated with contempt, the result is, that the same fate awaits the literal sense also; for, as already observed, if the spiritual sense be denied, there is no security even for the literal.

And—what has been the cause of this? It is the literal sense of the Word from which doctrine ought to be derived; and the Word has been studied with a view to particular doctrines, rather than to the principles of Charity. The *odium theologicum*, so manifest in volumes of controversy, is evidence of this calamity. *Had the moral and religious element been the first object of search, the advocates of a single sense would have had no ground upon which to stand.* But faith has been made first to precede and then to supersede charity. As long as faith is divided from charity, faith will itself divide the Church. Hence the advocates of faith alone divide the Church into as many churches as there are diverse doctrines concerning the truths which are of faith, which they would not do if they were in the light; for he who is in the light never doubts, still less denies, *that love to the Lord and charity towards the neighbour are the very essential principles of the Church*, and that upon them are founded all the truths which are of the Word, consequently which are of faith. (Matt. xxii, 40.)

Those who are principled in the doctrines of faith alone have no perception of what is true from a principle of good within them, but only a conscience of what is true, grounded in this, that they have been so taught by their parents and masters; these are they who are called "the men "of the place" in which Isaac had dwelled, that is, the men of Gerar.

What is the consequence? With these men of Gerar, doctrines which are primary are made subordinate, and doctrines which are subordinate are made primary. This is the result of the previously inverted order. As the lowest sense is regarded as primary, and the highest sense as only secondary, so faith is regarded as primary, and charity as subordinate. Hence the disputes between the shepherds of Gerar. These shepherds quarrelled with the shepherds of Isaac, or the ministers of the true Church, saying, "*The water is ours;*" that is to say, it was to them that pertained the gift of the Holy Spirit. For they believe their own to be the true Church, and the Church of the posterity or seed of Isaac to be a separation from the true Church, just as we see in the schisms of modern times.

What sort of contentions and oppositions are those now existing between Churches and their pastors, from which the fountains of "Isaac" have received their names, is very well known, namely, that all who do not altogether accede to the doctrine of their Church, as also to its statutes (*i.e.*, not only to the internal precepts, but also to the external, which relate to their own ministers, and such like), are called by them either sectarians, or separatists, or sometimes even enthusiasts. And that in the last times the like things will happen is very clear from what we see before us in the present day.

Well, then, let us return to *primitive truth.* Let

us dig open again the ancient wells of Abraham. Let the work of the Reformation of the Church be a work not of Innovation, but of *Restoration*; the restoration of those first principles of primitive charity on which alone the Scriptures can be rightly interpreted, and the Churches of Christendom be re-united—love to the Lord and love to the neighbour. In this case, we shall see that the principles of the interpretation of Scripture are the same with those of the Reformation of the Church, and those of the Reformation of the Church the same with those of re-union. The doctrines of the ancients were at first doctrines of charity; and only afterwards did they frame to themselves doctrines of faith. From their inmost experience and loving sympathies they knew what was meant, in the spiritual depths of their being, by the "oppressed," the "afflicted," the "poor," the "needy," the "hungry," the "blind," the "bound," the "stranger," the "fatherless," the "widow," the "outcast." From their love to their neighbour, they felt assured that if they visited and comforted these, how much more would the Lord Himself from heaven. It was from this now called "allegorical jargon" that they were led to believe in the prediction concerning the Incarnation; that the Divine Love would show itself forth in One who is the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God; so that in the Unity of God, Incarnate mankind might behold a Trinity of Love, Wisdom, and Power—the Love of The Father, the Wisdom of the Son, and the Power of The

Holy Ghost; and the Two Tables of the Law united on this principle—"INASMUCH AS YE HAVE DONE "IT UNTO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE MY BRETH-"REN, YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ME."

Here, then, is the re-opening of the ancient wells by the power of a two-fold love. Say that the Church repudiates this teaching; it only identifies itself with the shepherds of Gerar. Say that Scripture interpreted upon this principle is made "uncertain," or "fanciful," or "visionary," or is involved in "mystical obscurity," or "outrages the "principles of common sense," and we point to the scene presented by the Church and the world. Let us not imagine that, after a lapse of eighteen hundred years, there is no connection between the two. What, then, do we behold? The Christian Church, intent upon merely literal sense and upon doctrinal differences, interminably divided against itself; the Christian world manifesting the power of mutual love in the impenetrable thickness of its armour for ships of war, in the surest aimed thunderbolt of chilled steel, in the most colossal and murderous engines of death which human ingenuity can invent; and all this upon the principle that the rise and progress of war have reduced themselves to a question, not of morality, but of machinery, not of charity, but of calculation as to the relative destructiveness of weapons; since if that were done which should not be done, "then "it were well it were done quickly."

Well may we exclaim, "How long, O Lord, "Holy and True!" Friends, in this very narrative concerning Isaac, the prayer is answered. The pastors of Gerar had driven Isaac away; but in the very names which were given to the wells it was signified to them that their hostility arose from their aversion to spiritual things. And what was the issue? Consolation to the calumniated; repentance to the calumniators. "Fear not," says the Lord to Isaac, "for I am with thee, and will "bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant "Abraham's sake." And so, while Isaac and his servants are calmly reposing upon these promises of the Lord, their opponents are seen coming to him with overtures of peace; and Isaac said unto them, "Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate "me, and have sent me away from you? And "they answered, we saw certainly that the Lord "was with thee.....let us make a covenant with "thee." There were among them candid minds, who had begun to see their error. If the Lord was with Isaac and his servants, to oppose them was to oppose the Lord.

If the clergy would but seriously and systematically study the inner or spiritual sense of the Word of God, it is impossible but that *primitive truth* would soon be revived and be recognised by the faithful. It is easy enough to laugh at the efforts of Alchemists, but shall we therefore condemn the science of Chemistry? It is easy to laugh at the system of Ptolemy; but shall we therefore condemn the science of Astronomy? It is easy to

laugh at some of the interpretations of the early Fathers; but shall we therefore condemn the science of Analogies, Types, and Representatives? Of course, when any science is in its infancy, we may meet with abundance of puerile errors; but what would have become of the sciences if scientific men had contented themselves with holding their predecessors up to contumely? No; they set themselves seriously to ascertain facts, to eliminate laws; and they have been rewarded for their trouble, in being enabled to give a true interpretation of Nature; and if the Clergy would do the same in the case of the Word of God, they, too, would arrive at its true spiritual interpretation. However mistaken may be a great part of the interpretations of Lauretus, that volume (Silva Silvarum) shows that there must be among the Fathers a basis of mighty truth somewhere, which would long since have been discovered, if theologians had seriously set to work, instead of contenting themselves with the idle task of ridicule.

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